

honorary members, free honorary members, and correspondents, are invited to contribute.

"It is also the intention of the society to publish, at convenient times, a journal of its transactions."

We have read this document with the greatest attention more than once, and are utterly unable to glean therefrom any definite notion of the object which this association has in view, or the means, beyond the receipt of subscriptions, by which it proposes to operate. If the real good of art be contemplated, the object is praiseworthy and deserving of support; but until the scheme shall be clearly and explicitly defined, it would be absurd in us, as public writers, to do more than announce the name of the association, and do our best to give circulation to the announcement which it has made.

ON PREPARING PLASTER FOR THE USE OF MARBLE MASONS, &c.

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—As marble and stone masons frequently experience considerable trouble in putting together the component parts of chimney-pieces, tablets, and other work of the kind, in consequence of a great deal of the plaster now in general use being liable to blow or expand, and therefore lifting some parts of the work from its bed and forcing other parts out of their intended positions, causing great inconvenience to the mason, and preventing him from turning out his work in a sound and secure manner, it may be useful to many of your readers to know how to prepare this useful material in such a manner as to prevent these effects taking place.

Plaster in its raw state, I believe, contains a great quantity of acid, which should be totally dispelled before the workman can, with certainty and confidence, make use of it to the end of turning out his job in a sound and perfect state. Baking in a common oven is not sufficient for this, as the steam which rises as the plaster becomes heated, instead of being allowed to escape, descends to whence it rose and is again imbibed by the plaster, and causes it, when used, to set quick, to blow, and to become soft by giving again. If prepared in the following manner, many years' experience has taught me that all this may be avoided, and that plaster thus prepared will give the person who uses it more time by setting slowly; it will not expand, and will be much harder when set than any plaster baked in an oven.

After grinding to a powder in its raw state, sift it through a fine sieve, put it in an iron pot over a brisk fire, and stir it well about with an iron ladle or other suitable implement until it ceases bubbling and falls to a solid mass, something like a body of wet sand; let it cool, and it will be fit for use; the fire must be kept up brisk until the operation is finished.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

ONE OF THE CHAPT.

Leicester, August 13th, 1843.

LECTURES ON ARCHITECTURE AND ANTIQUITIES.

V.—Continuation of Lecture I. SACRATO ARCHITECTURE.

WHEN David was peaceably settled on his throne, "and the Lord had given him rest round about from all his enemies," (2 Samuel vii. 1), he wished to shew at once his gratitude and devotion, by erecting a temple worthy of his maker. "See now," he said to the prophet Nathan, "I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains." (v. 2.) But the pious intention was not to be carried into effect by himself, and the honour of building the temple was reserved for his son Solomon, who was a man of peace; whereas David had "shed much blood upon the earth." (1 Chron. xxii. 8.) Although not permitted to achieve the glorious task himself, he made early provision for his successor to carry it out. "And David said, Solomon, my son, is young and tender, and the house that is to be builded for the Lord must be exceeding magnificent of fame and of glory throughout all countries; I will, therefore, now make preparation for it." (v. 5.) In this undertaking, David derived great assistance from the friendship of Hiram, King of Tyre, who floated all the timber which was cut down in Lebanon, from Tyre to Joppa, whence it was conveyed across the land to Jerusalem. The letters and agreement for wages are highly interesting as recorded in the Books of Kings and Chronicles. The conquests of David, (see in particular, 1 Chron. ch. xvi.), enabled him to set apart for the great work, abundance of materials in all the metals, and especially in brass, which was accounted, says Josephus, "more precious than gold." (Antiq. B. xi. ch. v.

s. 2.) Many nations courted his friendship by valuable gifts, and others paid him large tribute. Some idea of the preparations may be formed when we are told that 30,000 men were appointed to cut the timber, 70,000 strangers to carry the burdens, and 80,000 to cut the stones; and over all these were 3,300 overseers, probably superior workmen and draughtsmen. The stones were all shaped and fitted together before the commencement of the building, so that no sound was heard of any tools during the progress. The temple was built on that spot whereon David erected an altar, even at the threshing-floor of Ornan, the Jebusite (2 Sam. xxiv. 18), the identical place where the great founder of the race had offered up his son Isaac. It is almost impossible to give an accurate idea of a building of which nothing remains but a written description. It has, however, been attempted, and Villalpanda, a Spanish jesuit, who is celebrated for his commentary on Ezekiel, and for a topography of Jerusalem, wrote a dissertation in which he insists that the theory and practice of permanent architecture commenced with the building of Solomon's Temple, and that the orders, which he says are falsely attributed to the Greeks, came into existence with it. He also endeavours to shew, that the proportions assigned by Vitruvius to the different orders, agree exactly with the description given of the temple. This opinion, that the temple at Jerusalem was the type of Grecian architecture, has had a powerful advocate in our own day, in an architect to whom no one can refuse the recognition of great learning and an intimate acquaintance with the architecture of the Greeks, viz. the late Professor Wilkins, who in the first part (and it is to be feared the last) of his "Prolusiones Architectonicæ," has put forth as his opinion, that the pro-

portions of Solomon's Temple, and those of one of the temples at Paestum, coincide in so extraordinary a degree, as to justify the belief that the projectors of the latter adopted the former as their model. In the work alluded to, Mr. Wilkins gives an elevation of the front of Solomon's Temple, in a pure Doric design, with a complete entablature, pediment, and fluted columns. But there seems more reason to rely upon the opinion entertained by many that the style of the Jewish temple was borrowed from the Egyptians. In the first place, the principal architect was a Tyrian, of the same name with Hiram, King of Tyre, and Lucian says that the Phœnicians built in the Egyptian manner, and that this manner was imitated in the temple appears (we think) from the whole arrangement of the structure. The lofty porch answers to the propylæa or *molæ* in front of Egyptian temples; the courts, with the chambers around, are also similar in each; the Holy of Holies, placed at the extreme end, and approached through successive apartments, accords with the situation of the sanctuary in Egyptian buildings; but if there is coincidence in the plan, there is still more in the details. The two brazen pillars made by Hiram, which were so remarkable for beauty of design and workmanship as to be distinguished by name, *Jachin* and *Boaz* (1 Kings vii. 21), correspond with the proportions of Egyptian columns; they were only four-and-a-half times so high as their diameter. The "lily-work," which is spoken of as the ornament of these columns, can hardly be any other than the lotus of the Egyptians, and of which we see no trace in a Doric capital. The position of these pillars is very much to our purpose; they were set up in front of the porch, one on each hand; and there is hardly a temple of any note in Egypt, without obelisks or



VIEW OF THE ENTRANCE TO LUXOR, UPPER EGYPT.

pillars, occupying a similar position. It may be added, also, that Solomon's connection with the Egyptians, as well by commerce as by marriage, favours the idea that he not only imitated their style, but that he likewise engaged their assistance, more particularly in the preparation of the masonry, in which they were extremely skilful, as their works to this day testify. And it is probable that the Mosaic command, "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image," prevented the Jews from ever attaining to any great excellence in sculpture, even when they exercised the art for laudable purposes. The building of the temple took place about ten centuries before the Christian era, whereas half that date is as much as

can be with truth ascribed to the earliest specimen of the Doric, the most ancient of the Greek orders. Lord Aberdeen ascribes the date of 437 B. C. to the Parthenon. The age of the Egyptian temples is lost in the remotest antiquity; some were probably erected sixteen or eighteen centuries before Christ. The whole of the Scriptural account of the Temple is calculated to convey an impression of great splendour. Josephus observes, "Now, the whole structure of the Temple was made with great skill, of polished stones, and those laid together so very harmoniously and smoothly, that there appeared to the spectators no sign of any hammer, or other instrument of architecture, but as if, without any use of them, the entire materials had naturally united